1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

554 chief had thus obtained a seat for his daughter, as well as ones
* 556 for his two sons. But usually a woman continues to use the
562 ancestral name given to her in infancy until she is able to
assist her husband in a potlatch, when a name is validated for
[553] her (see I, p. 410). The ancestral names of the first women
to occupy this earth are reserved for women and, like men's
names, vary in prestige according to the prowess of their
owners. Most names given to children, though embodied in
[551] origin myths, are applicable to either sex; and these are the
common designations of women. Cases are known in which a
woman has assumed an ancestral name if her brother has al-
lowed it to fall into ill-repute through failure to give potlatches.

554 With such a fluid system, no fixed line can be drawn be-
* 556 tween chief and commoner. But after his fourth potlatch a
622 man's influence in the community has become so great that
he will usually feel justified in having the carpenters make for
● [352] him a material seat. There is nothing to prevent a person
having one made for him before he has given the requisite
number of potlatches, but too rapid assumption may render
him liable to the scorn of the community through his failure
to show himself sufficiently "strong." The contempt shown
[626] to anyone attempting to usurp too lofty a place is a strong
deterrent to a proud young man.

[532] On the material seat are carved the man's ancestral crests,
[352] in other words the forms in which his first ancestors came to
earth, or some of the beings with whom they came in con-
tact. To show these is a matter of pride, but unless the dis-
play is fittingly validated, the man's own dignity will be
lowered, as well as that of his ancestors. Construction of a
seat is particularly common when a man is establishing himself
in the central position behind the fire, and claims this to be
where his first ancestor sat. Others among the first people
may have chosen seats in other parts of the house, and in these,
likewise, a man who is taking his ancestral name may have a
material seat constructed. Establishment in such a position
increases a chief's feeling of mental superiority, as if strength-